

Appl. No. : 10/647,694
Filed : August 25, 2003

REMARKS

Claims 4 and 9 have been amended to correct minor informalities. Claims 10 and 11 have been added. Support for the new claims can be found on page 9, lines 6-9 of the specification. Accordingly, Claims 4-11 are pending in this application. The amendments do not raise addition of new matter to the application. Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments and reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Objection

Claims 4-9 have been objected to because of the informalities set forth in the office action. The claims have been amended to correct the informalities in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, thereby obviating the objection. It is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 4-9 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 4-9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikeda et al. (US 5,190,269) in view of Hein (US 5,224,790) and further in view of Wakabayashi et al. (US 5,915,762). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The Examiner asserts "It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have provided the metal pipe of Ikeda et al with serrations on the outer portion as taught by Hein in order to create more surface area and a surface with a high coefficient of friction to attach the elastomer." However, Hein merely states:

"the inner cylindrical surface 15 of the inner sleeve 14 which contacts the stabilizer bar 10 is molded or extruded with knurls or serrations to provide a rough inner surface with a high coefficient of friction." (col. 3, lines 26-29) (Emphasis added.)

As is clear from the above, Hein teaches "serrations" as an alternative to "knurls" and further, considers both "knurls" and "serrations" to provide a rough inner surface. Hein does not teach or suggest using serrations at an axial edge of the metal pipe in addition to knurls as recited

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in Claim 4. The Examiner could not conclude that the teachings of Ikeda et al and Hein could render Claim 4 obvious.

Further, the Examiner asserts "It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have treated the metal pipe of Ikeda et al as modified by Hein by quenching as taught by Wakabayashi et al in order to give added strength and durability to the pipe."

However, first, as discussed above, "the metal pipe of Ikeda et al as modified by Hein" could not lead to the metal pipe recited in Claim 4.

Second, Wakabayashi et al teaches cementation quenching only a surface of a connecting rod for an internal combustion engine (column 4, lines 10-15), and does not teach or suggest quenching a portion which is not exposed to the outside or a knurls or serrations which are not smooth surfaces. In Wakabayashi et al, the female threaded holes 20 are not quenched. In Claim 4, the quenched knurling portion is covered by the annular cover and not exposed to the outside, and additionally, the serrations are quenched. As the female threaded holes 20 are not quenched, for example, Wakabayashi et al in no way provides a motivation to quench the knurling portion which is covered by the annular cover. By quenching the knurls, the annular cover can be more securely fixed, and this is not taught or suggested by Wakabayashi et al.

Third, although the Examiner asserts "quenching as taught by Wakabayashi et al in order to give added strength and durability to the pipe," the quenching is not for adding strength and durability to the pipe itself, but for strengthening the surface and tends to make the quenched portion brittle. The Examiner appears to misunderstand the effect of "quenching". There is no motivation in the prior art to provide surface strength to knurls and serrations formed in a vibration-isolation bushing. Ikeda et al does not teach or suggest strengthening an axial edge of the vibration-isolation bushing.

In Claim 4, it is significant to combine (i) providing a knurling on the metal pipe; (ii) providing a serration on at least one axial edge surface of the metal pipe; and (iii) quenching the metal pipe provided with the knurling and the serration. None of the cited references teaches or even suggests combining the above significant features (i) to (iii). One having ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated from the references to combine the significant features (i)

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to (iii) as explained above. Therefore, Claim 4 and the dependent claims could not be obvious over the references. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

New Claims 10 and 11

Claims 10 and 11 are dependent on Claim 4, and at least for the reason above, these claims could not be obvious over the references. It is respectfully requested that Claims 10 and 11 be allowed.

CONCLUSION

In light of the Applicant's amendments to the claims and the foregoing Remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number appearing below.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

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